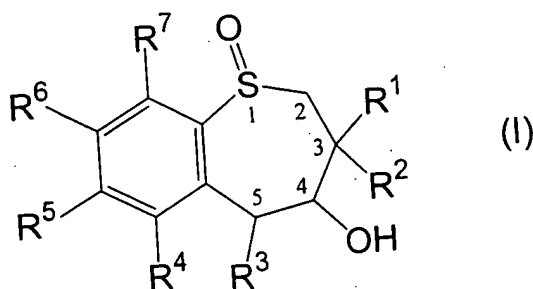


IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing an enantiomerically-enriched tetrahydrobenzothiepine-1-oxide having the formula (I):



wherein:

$R^1$  and  $R^2$  are independently selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkenyl, and alkynyl;

$R^3$  is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl-, aryl, and cycloalkyl;

wherein aryl, can be substituted with one or more substituent groups independently selected from the group consisting of alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, polyalkyl, and  $OR^{19}$ ;

$R^{19}$  is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, polyalkyl and, alkylarylalkyl;

$R^{19}$  is optionally substituted with quaternary heterocycle;

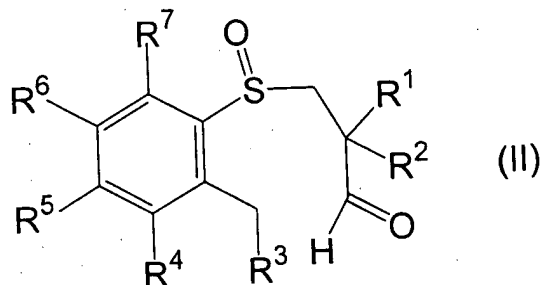
$R^4$ ,  $R^5$ ,  $R^6$ ,  $R^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, halo, and  $-NR^9R^{10}$ ;

$R^9$  and  $R^{10}$  are independently selected from the group consisting of H, and alkyl;

$R^3$  and the hydroxyl at the 4-position of the enantiomerically-enriched tetrahydrobenzothiepine-1-oxide are in a syn-conformation with respect to each other; and

the sulfur at the 1-position of the seven-member ring and the carbons at the 4-position and the 5-position of the seven member ring are chiral centers;

wherein the method comprises cyclizing an enantiomerically-enriched aryl-3-propanalsulfoxide having the formula (II):



wherein  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ ,  $R^5$ ,  $R^6$ , and  $R^7$  are as described above, and wherein the sulfur is an enantiomerically-enriched chiral center, to form the enantiomerically-enriched tetrahydrobenzothiepine-1-oxide of formula (I).

65. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said cyclizing step is performed in the presence of a base.

66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein said base is potassium t-butoxide.